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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: KERRY-LUGAR BILL, TERRORISM,
U.S.-IRAN - OCTOBER 09, 2009

Summary: Assistant Secretary Crowley's remarks that "there was no threat to the democratically elected government in Islamabad in view of the Pakistan Army's public opposition to the Kerry-Lugar Bill" dominated headlines in several newspapers on Friday. Some major dailies also gave front page coverage to Ambassador Patterson's to-be telecast television interview and attributed her as saying that "clauses in the Kerry-Lugar bill regarding the Pakistan Army 'are a big mistake.'" Newspapers also reported that Ambassador Patterson called on President Zardari to "discuss the situation emerging after Pakistan army, too, expressed serious concerns on the language and conditions of the U.S. legislation." President Zardari's spokesman Babar's statement dismissing the army's concerns over the Kerry-Lugar bill, saying that "there are established channels for the Pakistan Army to express its views" received prominent display. In its editorial on the subject, the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt," noted that "instead of advocating this disputed legislation, the Prime Minister should stick to the national interest and take to task the Pakistani diplomatic staff in Washington." The populist, often sensational national English daily "The News," observed that "it would have been wise to build consensus through talks beforehand rather than see the ugly conflict we are now witnessing." However, the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" expressed its apprehension that the "situation could become complicated if America does not agree to change unacceptable conditions in the bill."

In other news, reports that "President Obama's war council is weighing a new role for Pakistan in the eight-year-old struggle in the region" received wide coverage. Also highlighted were reports that Foreign Minister Qureshi urged the U.S. administration to provide Pakistan with "greater market access." Reports of killing of 17 militants in different parts of Swat were also highlighted. Some newspapers also highlighted reports that "17 people were killed in a bomb explosion in Afghan capital Kabul outside the Indian Embassy." End Summary.

Kerry-Lugar Bill

"Aid Not A Threat, U.S. Insists" "The News" (10/09)

"U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs P.J. Crowley has said the Obama administration believes that there was no threat to the democratically elected government in Islamabad in view of the Pakistan Army's public opposition to the Kerry-Lugar Bill, which is not in line with the official position of the Zardari government.

Crowley was talking to reporters in Washington at the Foreign Press Centre on Wednesday."

"Patterson Admits To Mistakes In Bill; Army Forwards Concerns"
"Daily Times" (10/09)

"U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W. Patterson admitted on Thursday that clauses in the Kerry-Lugar bill regarding the Pakistan Army 'are a big mistake.' According to a private TV channel, Patterson said the U.S. government had gone the extra mile to assure the government that the bill was not detrimental to Pakistan's sovereignty, but conceded the draft of the bill was poorly written, adding the U.S. would address the concerns of Pakistani politicians and military leadership. She hoped that the leadership of both countries could overcome these concerns through dialogue with military leadership, politicians and the civil society."

"U.S. Military Hardware Not Reserved For Pakistan" "Dawn" (10/09)

"U.S. military hardware is not reserved for Pakistan and can be given to other countries in South Asia as well, warns a powerful American lawmaker Gary Ackerman. Mr. Ackerman, who heads the House Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee on the Middle East and South Asia, was riled by Pakistan's reaction to the Kerry-Lugar bill, calling it an indication that the Pakistanis did not want friendship with the United States."

"Presidency Dismisses Concerns Of Army?" "The News" (10/09)

"The Presidency has apparently dismissed the serious concerns of the Pakistan Army Corps Commanders over the Kerry-Lugar Bill as President Asif Ali Zardari forges ahead with his unwavering support

for the bill. Spokesman of the Presidency said on Thursday said that there are established channels for the Pakistan Army to express its views. He was responding to questions about the public rebuff given by the army commanders in their meeting, which was released through the ISPR."

"Kerry-Lugar Bill Not Binding: PM" "The News" (10/09)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani said on Thursday that the Kerry-Lugar Bill was not binding and was a 'formula' for assistance to Pakistan and assured that the government would not take any step which was against the country's interest, sovereignty, dignity and honor. Addressing the political leadership of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the prime minister said this is U.S. own bill. This (Bill) is not an agreement. It is up to us whether we accept it or not."

"Army Stance Puts Government On The Back Foot" "Dawn" (10/09)

"The fissures created by the top army command's objections over some of the conditionalities attached to the Kerry-Lugar aid package continued to have a direct impact on the functioning of the government, with ripples created during the day as sources said that the Prime Minister's Secretariat had received the detailed version of the objections raised by General Ashfaq Pervez Kiyani and his fellow commanders a day earlier."

"Clauses In U.S. Bill Not Binding, Says FO" "Dawn" (10/09)

"The Foreign Office on Thursday said the Kerry-Lugar Bill was not an ideal document and its controversial clauses were not binding on Pakistan. 'The language of the bill could have been better,' Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit said on Thursday. The bill passed by the U.S. Congress last week has been at the centre of controversy because of some of its clauses about the country's armed forces and security affairs. Mr. Basit said the bill was not a negotiated document although the Foreign Office had provided its input."

"Government To Seek NA Vote On U.S. Aid Bill" "The News" (10/09)

"The government has decided to put the Kerry-Lugar Bill to vote in the National Assembly so that a formal response could be given to the objections raised by the Corps Commanders through a Parliament vote, an informed official told 'The News.'"

"U.S. Aid With Strings Under Fire In NA" "The News" (10/09)

"The Kerry-Lugar Bill continued to face the wrath of the opposition on Thursday in the National Assembly. The opposition termed the bill 'strategic sell-out of Pakistan's sovereignty,' suggesting the government to follow the sentiments of parliament and the people of Pakistan rather to go blindly for the peanuts."

"Opposition Terms Kerry-Lugar Bill 'National Insult'" "Daily Times" (10/09)

"During a debate on the Kerry-Lugar bill in the National Assembly on Wednesday, the opposition called it a 'national insult' and an attempt to interfere in the country's internal affairs. The treasury, on the other hand, defended the bill, saying it was a step by the U.S. to support the democratic dispensation in the country."

"Army Shouldn't Have Gone Public With U.S. Aid Concerns: Babar" "Daily Times" (10/09)

"The army should not have gone public with its concerns over the Kerry-Lugar bill, the President's spokesman Farhatullah Babar said on Thursday."

"Kerry-Lugar Bill to Become Law Even If Obama Doesn't Sign It" "The News" (10/09)

"The Kerry-Lugar Bill will become a law even if President Barrack Obama neither signs nor returns it to the U.S. Congress for reconsideration within 10 days of its presentation to him. If a returned bill is passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives as it is, it will become a law and the Presidential signatures would not be required, a legal expert told 'The News.'"

"Kerry-Lugar Bill In The Eye Of Hurricane" "The News" (10/09)

"As criticism continues to grow on the Kerry-Lugar Bill, and a witch-hunt for scapegoats and the ultimate fall guy has begun, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is saying, 'Don't look at us, we did all we could given the circumstances.' In a departure from the past, even the role of Ambassador Husain Haqqani is being defended by the ministry, which has no love lost for him. 'To be fair to our mission in Washington, 35 communications have been sent from our mission regarding the Kerry-Lugar Bill and these have been shared with all stakeholders in the country. At every stage as the Kerry-Lugar Bill progressed, Islamabad was being kept informed. The Foreign Office, as well, continued giving inputs and the last input as I recall was when the U.S. Senate had passed the bill,' confessed a senior official."

"Parliament Should Reject The Controversial Kerry-Lugar Bill," an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (10/09)

"Having declared the Kerry-Lugar Bill a victory of the government a day ago, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani is now offering assurance of removing people's and military's reservations about the bill.... Instead of advocating this disputed legislation, the Prime Minister should stick to the national interest and take to task the Pakistani diplomatic staff in Washington. Moreover, American lobbying firm that received millions of dollars from Pakistan and in return protected the interests of India should also be penalized.... The parliament should reject the bill."

"Storm Brewing?," an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (10/09)

"The army has, unusually, made its feelings public, with no room left for doubt over what the military made of the Kerry-Lugar Bill.... It must also be pointed out that one reason for the military ire is the failure to take it into confidence before the contents of the bill became public. Surely, it would have been wise to build consensus through talks beforehand rather than see the ugly conflict we are now witnessing.... There are also suggestions of a new, three-way divide opening up, with Prime Minister Gilani stating Parliament should decide the future of the bill and President

Zardari's camp insisting that it must be defended tooth and nail....

There can be no doubt the provisions of the bill are controversial, even though there is a great deal to be said for strengthening democracy. Mr. Gilani's call for consensus seems the wiser course of action."

"Army's Reaction To The Kerry-Lugar Bill," an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (10/09)

"ISPR's press release can give us an idea about the criticism that corps commanders might have undertaken against the American legislation.... Situation could become complicated if America does not agree to change unacceptable conditions in the bill. Only time will tell how this already-passed legislation can be amended."

"Politically Divided Again," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (10/09)

"Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani has taken the debate over the Kerry-Lugar Bill to the National Assembly where it can be either accepted or rejected on the basis of a majority vote. The bill is important for Pakistan, not only in terms of the unprecedentedly high grant in aid from the U.S., but also in terms of acceptance of Pakistan's economy for the investors of the world, though there is debate even among development economists on its usefulness. A surface view would be that if the Bill is rejected by Pakistan, the money it is to receive over the next five years will not be available. But the U.S., looking at the difficulties faced by Islamabad in the shape of an almost universal rejection, may modify the 'conditionalities' of the Bill which are clearly intrusive. Its Afghan policy depends on cooperation from Pakistan and the coming operation in South Waziristan is an important link in that policy."

"Kerry-Lugar Bill: The Saga Continues," an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (10/09)

"As the debate continues to be very heated on this issue, few, if any, are giving attention to our reliance on foreign external assistance in the current fiscal year and its impact on the economy, if the money is not credited to Pakistan's account.... Thus if assistance from the Kerry-Lugar Bill is not forthcoming, then the budget deficit would rise as would inflation and compromise the government's ability to meet the IMF targets for the next tranche. The question that one may well ask is whether the government's heavy reliance on external assistance in itself is in Pakistan's interest."

"Now Reject Humiliating Kerry-Lugar Bait," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (10/09)

"Under these circumstances, we believe the Government is left with no other option but to reject the bill. Peoples Party claims to be championing the cause of the people, so it should listen to their unambiguous message on the issue. We may add that we do not advocate spoiling of relations with the United States or non-cooperation in the war on terror but the world and especially the United States must respect sensitivities and self-respect of the nation."

"PPP Isolated On KLB (Kerry-Lugar Bill)," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (10/09)

"There is now a national consensus across the board in Pakistan that the present form of the Kerry-Lugar Bill is unacceptable for Pakistan as it further compromises its sovereignty; brings in neighbors into Pakistan's affairs; puts all the onus on Pakistan to prove that it has done what is expected of it.... The argument that if Pakistan does not accept the Bill, all aid flows will stop is absurd given that the U.S. needs Pakistan for its 'war on terror' in Afghanistan. Instead, our parliament should reject the bill given the prevailing sentiments and ground realities and ask the U.S. to redraft this Bill - which is as much its own need as it may be Pakistan's.... The nation and the state are one on rejecting the KLB in its present shape. Only the Presidency and the ruling party

are isolated on the other side of the fence."

"Folly Beyond Comprehension," op-ed by Ayaz Amir in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (10/09)

"Where our American friends were trying to build bridges of friendship they have succeeded in laying a minefield which has ignited outrage and mass suspicion across the length and breadth of Pakistan's brittle political landscape. The bill's (Kerry-Lugar) details are now a matter of secondary importance. A professor of linguistics can come and put a benign gloss on them but most Pakistanis will not be convinced. The general perception fostered by some of the bill's language is that it is an affront to Pakistani dignity and sovereignty. No amount of eleventh-hour massaging or spin doctoring is going to alter this perception. True, Pakistani dignity may be a pretty battered concept. If we run through our list of historical achievements, there may not be much to be proud of. Still, one can live with diminished dignity if one's nose is not rubbed in the dust. This bill's sublime achievement is to do precisely this. For it reads more like a sustained indictment of Pakistan than a charter of friendship.... Zardari and the PPP government are climbing up the wrong mountain. The Kerry-Lugar Bill is not their salvation. Given the current state of public opinion it will destroy them."

"I Repent" an op-ed by Abbas Athar in the liberal nation Urdu language daily "Express" (cir.25,000) (10/09)

"A little while ago, Kamran Shahid, anchorperson of the ExpressNews program 'Frontline' called me up and said that U.S. Ambassador Anne W. Patterson has admitted we made a mistake by adding conditions pertaining to the military, nuclear program and terrorism in the Kerry-Lugar bill.... Let us hope that our National Assembly will shred the Kerry-Lugar bill, turn it into three footballs and kick them back into the White House, the Senate and the Congress. This way, for the first time in history, Pakistan will become a sovereign, independent state - a country whose three-fourths people E

hate all kinds of bills, whether they are of electricity, gas or food items. They will not be able to afford another bill."

"The Kerry-Lugar Bill," an op-ed by M.A. Niazi in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (10/09)

"The passage of the Kerry-Lugar Bill through the US Congress has occasioned a storm in Pakistan.... The present government has defended it as a great diplomatic triumph, so the opposition to it by the Opposition cannot be ruled out as being based more on partisan spirit than because the Bill is so bad. However, the Bill is supposed to satisfy another party, apart from the government - the Pakistan Army.... It seems clear to all Pakistanis that the 'Aid' is coming in lieu of support for the United States' War on Terror. And not just verbal support, but the commitment of troops to the various fronts they have been fighting on. Therefore, the criticism of the Bill that emanates from the Corps Commanders' Conference assumes even greater significance."

"Mystery Of Kerry-Lugar Conditions Almost Solved" news analysis by Shaheen Sehba in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (10/09)

"Intense search has begun in political and media circles to find out who is the father of the Pakistan Army and ISI-specific conditions in the Kerry-Lugar Bill, which ultimately led to the assertive statement issued by the 122nd corps commanders' meeting on Wednesday. But the search will not be too difficult.... The United States clearly has a few good short-term policy options in relation to Pakistan. American policymakers should endeavor to recognize the failings of their past policies and avoid repeating their mistakes. The United State has sought short-term gains from its relationship with Pakistan, inadvertently accentuating that country's problems in the process. Pakistan's civil and military elite, on the other hand, must understand how their three-part paradigm for state and nation building has led Pakistan from one disaster to the next. Pakistan was created in a hurry and without giving detailed thought to various aspects of national and state building. Perhaps it is

time to rectify that mistake by taking a long-term view. Both Pakistan's elite and their U.S. benefactors would have to participate in transforming Pakistan into a functional, rather than ideological, state."

Terrorism

"U.S. Seeks Greater Cooperation From Pakistan Army" "Dawn" (10/09)

"The differences between the Pakistani military and the Asif Zardari government has placed the U.S. administration in a difficult situation which is seeking greater cooperation from the army for destroying reported Al Qaeda safe havens in FATA. The Obama administration held a meeting of its war council at the White House on Wednesday evening, which focused primarily on Pakistan. After the meeting, U.S. officials told reporters that the war council was weighing a new role for Pakistan in the eight-year-old struggle in the region."

"Pakistan Wants Greater Access To E.U., U.S. Markets: Qureshi"
"Business Recorder" (10/09)

"As President Barack Obama discusses the U.S. strategy toward Pakistan with his top advisers on Wednesday, Foreign Minister appealed for market access, military technology - and above all, trust. Shah Mehmood Qureshi told Reuters 'The challenge we face is far larger than that.' 'We are not asking for you to keep doling out money and aid, we are asking for greater market access.' 'Better trade with the European Union and the U.S. can help our economy stabilize.'"

"U.S. Diplomat Told To Avoid Confiding In Media" "Dawn" (10/09)

"Senior U.S. diplomat Gerald Feierstein was summoned to the Foreign Office and asked to refrain from discussing intelligence matters in media, a diplomatic source said on Thursday.... Mr. Feierstein's summoning to the Foreign Office was not officially announced and the U.S. Embassy also didn't confirm it. Mr. Richard, the Embassy's spokesman, said Mr. Feierstein had visited the Foreign Office on

Wednesday, adding that he wasn't sure about the purpose of the visit."

"Seventeen Militants Killed; 15 Bodies Found In Swat" "The News" (10/09)

"Security forces on Thursday claimed to have killed 17 militants in parts of Swat as General Officer Commanding (GOC) Maj-Gen Ashfaq Nadeem asserted that peace had been restored to 95 per cent areas of the district. He said majority of the militants had either been killed or arrested during the Army offensive and some had surrendered. Meanwhile 15 bodies of suspected militants were found in Swat on Thursday."

"Suicide Blast Kills 17, Injures 76 In Kabul" "Dawn" (10/09)

"A large bomb exploded outside the Indian Embassy in central Kabul on Thursday, killing 17 people and wounding 76 others, in the latest of a series of militant attacks on diplomatic and government buildings in the capital. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the bombing, saying the target had been the Embassy. It was the second big attack on the Indian Mission in 15 months."

"9 Militants Killed In Waziristan" "Dawn" (10/09)

"Four militants were killed in an exchange of fire with troops in Shawal area of North Waziristan on Thursday.... Five more militants were killed and several others injured when troops mounted ground and air assault on suspected positions in South Waziristan, the sources said."

"Bodies Of 33 Militants Found" "Dawn" (10/09)

"The bullet-riddled bodies of 33 suspected Taliban were found in different areas of Char Bagh on Thursday and a senior military commander said the militants had been killed in clashes with

security forces. According to reports, all the bodies were of local militants."

"Waziristan Sealed, Jets Targeting Taliban positions" "Daily Times" (10/09)

"Security forces have started bombing Taliban positions in South Waziristan as the army prepares for a ground operation in the agency. We have sealed the area and are involved in aerial targeting of Taliban locations, military spokesman Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas told the Financial Times on Thursday."

"Time Not Ripe For U.S. Withdrawal: Asfandyar" "The News" (10/07)

"Head of the Awami National Party (ANP) Asfandyar Wali Khan has said it wasn't a proper time for the withdrawal of U.S.-led NATO troops from Afghanistan because the situation in the war-torn country requires the foreign forces to stay there."

"\$1 Billion Appeal For Malakand To Be Launched Today" "Dawn" (10/09)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani will on Friday give a go-ahead for an international appeal to raise \$1.078 billion for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the battered Malakand division, a senior government official told 'Dawn.'"

"The Pakistan Angle," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (10/09)

"The third of five planned meetings between President Obama and his full national security team to review the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan focused on Pakistan, and media reports suggest that the case for a 'Pakistan first', counter-terrorism-oriented strategy is still being made very strongly by some U.S. officials.... Pakistan's position, as believed to have been communicated by army and government officials, is closer to General McChrystal's 'stability' strategy, but minus the troop build-up. It is not yet known which option President Obama will choose from the many alternatives that are being proposed."

"Jihad And The State," an op-ed by Ayesha Siddiqi in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (10/09)

"Pakistan's support today is central to winning the war on terror.... While institutions of the state have problems due to the manner in which the U.S. chooses to fight the war, a common perception is that the Taliban imposed the war on Pakistan due to the U.S. presence. So, to many the Taliban and Jihadis essentially represent a struggle against American imperialism in Afghanistan. What, of course, goes hand in hand with such perceptions is the view that 9/11 was an American conspiracy to invade Afghanistan... The battle for hearts and minds is essentially a part of the exercise of making the war legitimate. Currently, the argument presented by some in Pakistan, including certain prominent televangelists, is that America's war essentially represents a clash of civilizations and is being imposed on Pakistan by an illegitimate government on behalf of the U.S."

U.S.-Iran

"'Bunker Buster' Bomb To Be Ready Soon: U.S." "Dawn" (10/09)

"The Pentagon has said a giant 'bunker buster' bomb will be ready within months, adding a powerful weapon to the U.S. arsenal amid tensions over Iran's nuclear program. The 30,000-pound massive ordnance penetrator (MOP) is designed to knock out fortified sites buried deep underground, like those used by Iran and North Korea to protect its nuclear work, Press Secretary Geoff Morrell told reporters on Wednesday."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson